

1996

Report of the Executive Committee: Procedures for New Program Review

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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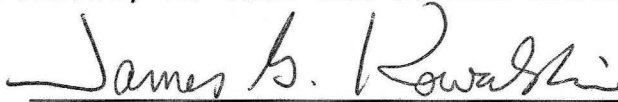
UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
Kingston, Rhode Island
FACULTY SENATE
BILL
Adopted by the Faculty Senate

TO: President Robert L. Carothers

FROM: Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

1. The attached BILL, titled Report of the Executive Committee:
Procedures for New Program Review,
is forwarded for your consideration.
2. The original and two copies for your use are included.
3. This BILL was adopted by vote of the Faculty Senate on February 22, 1996.
4. After considering this bill, will you please indicate your approval or disapproval. Return the original or forward it to the Board of Governors, completing the appropriate endorsement below.
5. In accordance with Section 10, paragraph 4 of the Senate's By-Laws, this bill will become effective March 14, 1996, three weeks after Senate approval, unless: (1) specific dates for implementation are written into the bill; (2) you return it disapproved; (3) you forward it to the Board of Governors for their approval; or (4) the University Faculty petitions for a referendum. If the bill is forwarded to the Board of Governors, it will not become effective until approved by the Board.

February 23, 1996
(date)



James G. Kowalski
Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

ENDORSEMENT

TO: Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

FROM: President of the University

Returned.

- a. Approved ✓.
 - b. Approved subject to final approval by Board of Governors ____.
 - c. Disapproved ____.
- 2.29.96
(date)
- 
President

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
Kingston, Rhode Island

FACULTY SENATE

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
#95-96-2
February 12, 1996

BACKGROUND:

Under present UNIVERSITY MANUAL regulations (see UNIVERSITY MANUAL 8.85.10 - 8.85.25 and 5.68.10), proposals for new degree programs require a multi-committee review and, in cases where the programs will involve additional expense above the current calendar year minimum for an instructor, a comparative ranking process. In the ranking process, all proposed programs which exceed the expense threshold mentioned are compared, prioritized, and categorized into three classes which can be roughly described as: very high priority, comparable to existing programs, and low priority.

Many faculty and administrators, including some who participated in devising the present procedures, have expressed concern and raised criticisms about them. The main criticisms can be summarized as follows: First, the process is overly long, requiring review by many committees each of which can prevent the proposal from making it to the next stage of review. Second, the ranking requirements means that proposals must be reviewed as a group; and to do this, proposals must be submitted to the Curricular Affairs Committee by November 1 and to the New Program Review Committee by January in order that there be enough time to complete the remaining steps of the review before the end of the academic year. But the number of steps required before submission to the New Program Review Committee is difficult to complete in time for the January deadline. In addition, programs approved early in the calendar year must be held until the November date and programs which have completed all other aspects of review after January must be held until the following January. The upshot is that it is effectively impossible for a proposal to be initiated and to make it through the review process in less than two academic years. Third, the ranking process seems to cause an unbalanced emphasis on the costs of programs rather than their quality and has engendered a situation in which almost all recently proposed new programs have been claimed to entail no new costs.

In the fall of 1995, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee discussed these and other problems with University Provost Swan and, at her request, decided to take the initiative in sponsoring a review and revision of the existing procedures. To this end the Executive Committee formed a special subcommittee for the task. The members of the subcommittee (whose work continues) are: Harold Bibb, representing the Graduate School and Graduate Council; Leonard Kahn, representing the Curricular Affairs Committee; James Kowalski, representing the Executive Committee and chair of the subcommittee;

Blair Lord, representing the Provost; and Fritz Wenisch, representing the Constitution, By-Laws and University Manual Committee.

The proposals below result from the subcommittee's work with some modifications by the Senate Executive Committee. The proposals would simplify the approval process considerably by eliminating the New Program Review Committee and by giving its responsibilities to other standing committees. The proposed legislation also includes more specific deadlines to help insure the timely consideration of proposals. Further, although no committee would be able to prevent a proposal from coming to the Senate, appropriate committees would still have the responsibilities to use their collective expertise in reviewing and making recommendations to the Senate on proposals and the Senate would still approve or disapprove new program proposals.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee, having reviewed and accepted with some modifications the proposals of its subcommittee on program review and approval procedures, recommends:

1) that existing University Manual Sections 8.85.10 - 8.85.20 on the review of new programs be replaced with proposed 8.85.10 - 8.85.30 as shown below; and

2) that existing Manual sections 5.68.10-11, the charge and membership of the New Program Review Committee shown below, be deleted.

Existing 8.85.10 - 8.85.25, 5.68.10, and 5.68.11

8.85.10 New Programs. Every proposal for a new curriculum or a new program shall include when it is presented to the Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate an estimate of the initial cost and the continuing cost of additional resources, including library, required for the curriculum or program. When the Curricular Affairs Committee recommends the approval of programmatic legislation to the Faculty Senate or, in accordance with section 8.85.20, to the New Program Review Committee, the Curricular Affairs Committee shall forward a budgetary impact statement. The impact statement shall be prepared by the department or departments initiating the proposal in conjunction with the Vice President for Business and Finance or the Vice President's designee.

8.85.20 Annual Review of New Programs. In January of each year, all new programs which require the Board's approval and/or the allocation of university funds, recommended by the Curricular Affairs Committee, Graduate Council, Research Policy and Facilities Committee, or any other group empowered to propose new programs, shall be reviewed and ranked according to procedures outlined in sections 8.85.21

and 8.85.22. Proposals for programs which were disapproved by the Faculty Senate, President or the Board during the preceding year or which were not approved by the Board within two years after approval by the Faculty Senate and the President shall be reconsidered by the group which originally proposed the program to the new Program Review Committee during its consideration of new programs upon the request of the sponsors of the program. If the program is reapproved it shall be forwarded to the New Program Review Committee for ranking.

8.85.21 This review shall be conducted by the New Program Review Committee. See 5.68.10 for membership.

8.85.22 New programs shall be ranked according to the following four criteria, listed in order of importance explained in detail in the Manual sections indicated: centrality of the program to the mission of the University of Rhode Island (8.86.41); extent to which the program would contribute to the University's fulfillment of its three main responsibilities, teaching, research and service (8.86.42); relationship of the program to the developmental plans of the University (8.86.43); projected cost effectiveness considerations (8.86.44).

8.85.23 Following the review of all program proposals, this group shall submit its recommendations for ranking according to priority together with a written rationale for the ranking to the Faculty Senate for action at its second meeting in February, and thence to the President. When new programs are approved by the Faculty Senate, approval shall be classified as follows: approval Class A will mean that the program is deemed to be of such merit as to justify the recommendation of the immediate allocation of funds for its implementation; approval Class B would recommend that proposed new programs compete for resources on an equal basis with all other University activities; approval Class C would recommend funding of the proposed new program should additional funds be made available to the University.

8.85.24 For the purpose of this review, the term "programs" shall include inter alia centers, institutes and bureaus, which require the allocation of general revenue funds for direct costs. If programs do not require the allocation of general revenue funds for direct costs, or if the program can be entirely supported by reprogramming existing departmental funds, or if the amount of general revenue funds required per year does not exceed the current calendar year minimum salary of an instructor, no review under 8.85.20 shall be required. Ventures for which the University may assume full or partial financial responsibility shall be reviewed and ranked during the year prior to the date intended for the assumption of funding by the University, provided that the new financial responsibility exceeds the current minimum salary for an instructor.

8.85.25 In exceptional circumstances, proponents of new programs may request that the New Program Review Committee meet to determine whether an exception to the review procedure is warranted. If there is question as to the applicability of the program review process to a new academic venture, the New Program Review Committee shall have the authority to decide whether the venture in question should be included in the program review. The New Program Review Committee's decisions in these matters shall be final.

5.68.10 The New Program Review Committee shall conduct an annual review of new programs as outlined in sections 8.85.20 through 8.85.25.

5.68.11 The committee shall comprise: the chairpersons of the Graduate Council, the Curricular Affairs Committee, and the Research Policy and Facilities Committee; two representatives from the Council of Deans; the Faculty Senate Executive Committee; two representatives of the Student Senate, one representative of the Graduate Student Association, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Business and Finance. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs shall chair meetings of this committee.

Proposed 8.85.10 - 8.85.30

8.85.10 New Programs. In this section the term "program" shall be understood to include any curriculum or University sponsored activity requiring the assignment of one or more faculty to serve in a teaching, research, or service capacity and intended to result in the conferral of a certificate or other credential or of an undergraduate or graduate degree. It also covers centers, including partnerships, bureaus, institutes, and similar entities.

8.85.11 A coordinating and review committee (see 8.85.17) shall be responsible for receiving a proposal for a new program, for notifying the appropriate units of the University of the proposal, for requesting Budget Office financial review of the proposal, for calling for comment on the proposal, for setting deadlines for receipt of comment, for evaluating the proposed program, for insuring that all required information is included or appended to the proposal, and for forwarding the proposal, or a revised version of the proposal, with its report and recommendations, to the Faculty Senate for subsequent action. In its report to the Senate, the coordinating and review committee shall indicate whether it recommends approval or disapproval of the proposal and shall recommend a ranking of the proposal according to categories described in 8.85.30.

8.85.12 Proposals shall be prepared using formats specified by the Board of Governors and kept on file in the office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

8.85.13 A proposal submitted by a college ~~committee~~ shall have been approved in accordance with the college's established procedures before submission to the coordinating and review committee.

8.85.14 The coordinating and review committee shall insure that all departments, colleges, or other units directly involved or affected by a proposal for a new program, including the Joint Educational Policy Committee and the Council of Deans, are informed of the proposal and are given time to comment or otherwise respond. Unless otherwise sanctioned by a special act of the Faculty Senate, the coordinating and review committee shall allow at least thirty (30) and no more than forty-five (45) calendar days for responses after public notification.

8.85.15 Unless an extension of up to thirty (30) calendar days has been authorized by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, the coordinating and review committee shall submit its report on the proposal to the Faculty Senate for action no later than thirty (30) calendar days after the deadline set for receipt of responses on a proposal. If a report has not been submitted within the specified time, the proposal may be submitted directly to the Faculty Senate for action.

8.85.16 The coordinating and review committee may require changes in the format of and may recommend substantive changes in a proposal before forwarding it to the Senate for action. The coordinating and review committee shall make comments submitted in response to a proposal available for inspection, indicating in its forwarding report to the Senate, the persons and/or groups who have submitted comments and where the comments are on file and available for review.

8.85.17 Normally, the Curricular Affairs Committee, the Graduate Council, and the Research Policy and Facilities Committee shall serve as the coordinating and review committee respectively for proposals for new undergraduate degree programs, for new graduate degree programs, and for new centers, including partnerships, bureaus and institutes. If questions arise as to the appropriate committee to serve as the coordinating and review committee for a proposal for a new program, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee shall determine which committee has responsibility. The Executive Committee may establish or recommend establishing a special committee to serve as the coordinating and review committee for a proposal.

8.85.20 In conducting their review, the coordinating and review committee shall evaluate the proposed program primarily according to the following criteria, listed in order of importance and explained in more detail in the Manual sections indicated: centrality of the program to the mission of the University of Rhode Island (8.86.41); extent to which the program would contribute to the University's fulfillment of its teaching, research and service responsibilities, (8.86.42); relationship of the program to the developmental plans of the University (8.86.43); projected cost effectiveness considerations (8.86.44).

8.85.30 When new programs are approved by the Faculty Senate, approval may be classified as follows: approval Class A will mean that the program is deemed to be of such merit as to justify the recommendation of the immediate allocation of funds for its implementation; approval Class B would recommend that proposed new programs compete for resources on an equal basis with all other University activities; approval Class C would recommend funding of the proposed new program should additional funds be made available to the University.